WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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      1.   A connection management apparatus for connecting a plurality of physically connectable network devices based on connection paths set for individual users, comprising:

10   a client port connectable to the users via a network;

      a server port connectable to a server;

      a lookup table including one or more pairs of tags and destination addresses, each of said

15 pairs indicating a user and a next destination of a received packet by using a tag attached to the received packet as a search key wherein said attached tag indicates a user and a destination; and

      a tag replacement and transmission part

20 replacing a tag of the received packet with a tag detected from the lookup table and transmitting the resulting packet to a destination address detected from the lookup table;

      wherein a packet received from one of the

25 users and the server is transmitted to one of the plurality of network devices and a packet received from one of the plurality of network devices is transmitted to one of the plurality of network devices, the server and the users.

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      2.   The connection management apparatus as

35 claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of network devices are connected in a star topology.

3.   The connection management apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein in the lookup table search keys are grouped for each of the users.

4.   The connection management apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein in the lookup table the search keys are further grouped for each of an up-directional connection path of a packet transmitted from a client side to a server side and a down-directional connection path of a packet transmitted from the server side to the client side.

5.   The connection management apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the lookup table further includes one or more physical ports corresponding to search keys together with the pairs of tags and destination addresses each of which indicates a user and a next destination.

6.   The connection management apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the lookup table is rewritable through a terminal.

7.　The connection management apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the tag is a VLAN tag.